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MARTLET

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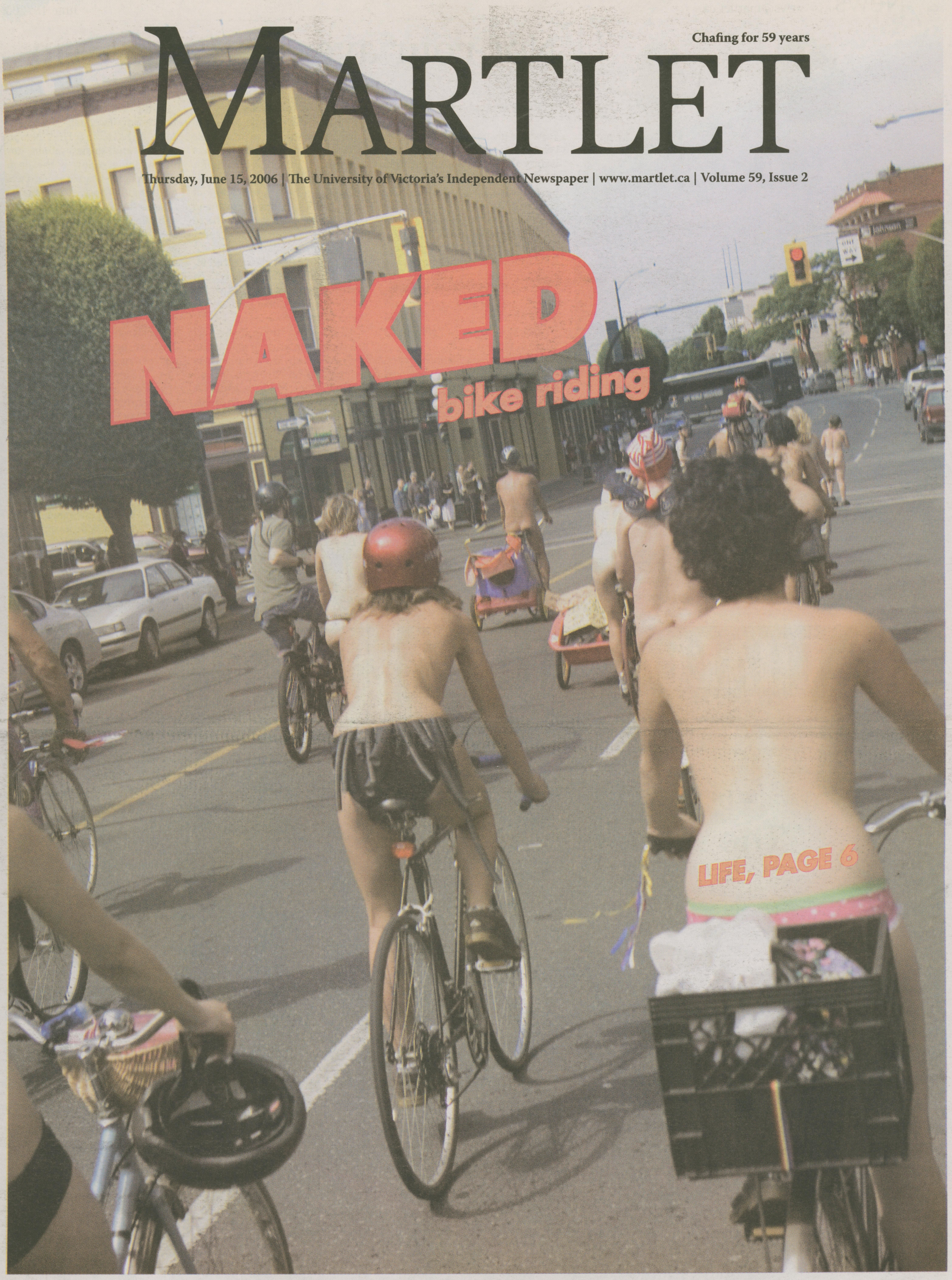

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Not your average canoe trip

BRIAN OWENS PHOTO

Luke Johnny (left) and Chief Jacks perform a prayer song.

By Rosie Westwood

Sunshine gleamed off rows of silver masts and sparkled on the waters of Port Sidney Marina on a clear day perfect for watching sailboats glide past the surrounding Gulf Islands.

Visitors who paddled the bay with Tseycum Canoe Tours on June 3 absorbed First Nations legend, history and song during the ecotourism business's launch.

"It's a really good feeling to educate the people about how it was," said Chief Vern Jacks of Tseycum First Nations, a Coast Salish band based in Sidney.

As the only First Nations owned and operated ecotourism business on Vancouver Island, Tseycum Canoe Tours is a departure from traditional tourism.

Guides combine knowledge of both the natural world and First Nations culture to lead guests on "interpretive tours" where culture is the highlight.

"Chief Jacks was looking to create employment for band members in an environmentally sensitive manner," said general manager Aaron Reith.

"We live by the past, the history of our ancestors and their teachings," said Chief Jacks. "We get to show people who we are."

To begin each of the hour and a half canoe tours, shaman Luke Johnny sang to the beat of Chief Jacks' drum in a prayer song for participants' life-long protection.

Seated two-by-two in the 30-foot canoe, guides shaman Johnny and Casey Tweddell and each of the 10 passengers clutched yellow cedar paddles with pointed blades.

The canoe, a fiberglass reproduction, would originally have been carved out of a single red cedar. A keel keeps the boat balanced in rough waters.

"It's a positive thing if the keel hits the reef entering or exiting the bay," said Johnny from the stern as six paddlers on either side pulled the canoe out of the marina. "It signifies that you will return to this place in peace."

A river otter somersaulted off the dock as the canoe passed the shiny white hulls of a pleasure craft on the right and grand waterfront properties tucked into the landscape on the left.

Tweddell pointed out the marina's resident swans.

"Tseycum people use swan feathers in dancing regalia because the purity of the colour signifies that they are spiritually clean," said Johnny.

As the canoe followed the coastline north, Tweddell and Johnny took turns telling First Nations legends and stories—about how the weeping willow is the dropping, weeping head of a guard who neglected his post, about how the Sasquatch are excellent swimmers and slip from island to island in deep fog, and about the woman who came to the Tseycum people singing a paddle song, which Johnny then performed to Tweddell's drum.

Passengers learned that the sticky gel inside rockweed has antibacterial qualities and that Tseycum people used the hollow bulb of large bull kelp as a carrying case. The long, string-like sections of bull kelp can be tied together to form a fishing line, "good for fishing Halibut," Tweddell added.

As passengers exited the boat at the end of the tour they said their names aloud to thank the canoe for the journey and to say goodbye.

Tseycum Canoe Tours follows the lead of a handful of businesses in B.C., the largest being Takaya Tours of North Vancouver.

Within three weeks Reith hopes to have a sea kayak tour, whale watching tour and a Sidney Spit medicinal plant walk tour up and running.

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Faculty denied benefit

by Norman Ed Baskerville

The university has a smaller carrot to dangle than other institutions when recruiting the best possible faculty, according to some members of the UVic Faculty Association.

UVic remains the only university in B.C., and the only research-based university in North America, that does not have a tuition waiver—a taxable benefit that covers the cost of university education for faculty and librarians, and their spouses and dependents.

William Pfaffenberger, president of the Faculty Association, said he knows of faculty members with children near or of university age who are getting offers every year from UBC and SFU. These members are considering leaving UVic rather than pay $4411.50 a year for full-time enrollment. UBC, SFU, and even the relatively small UNBC have had tuition waivers for over 10 years.

The Faculty Association states that it has sought a 100 per cent tuition waiver for its members since the '90s, but UVic administration has routinely denied its requests. In 2001, a non-taxable tuition scholarship fund was negotiated, which covered half of tuition and was fully funded by the Faculty Association.

However, in 2006, faculty members were unwilling to continue paying for a benefit that other B.C. universities have granted their employees, Pfaffenberger said, particularly since UVic's salaries lag behind its sister institutions.

Another problem was the recent Revenue Canada ruling that made tuition scholarships taxable to the employee. The Faculty Association quickly complied with the decision and eliminated the scholarship fund in order to prevent retrospective tax audits for its faculty.

On March 28, Faculty Association members voted to pass a salary and benefit settlement. Pfaffenberger described it as an extremely good agreement, which included "long-awaited across-the-board increases." But despite the settlement, many faculty members are still "bitterly disappointed" that the tuition waiver was not on the bargaining table.

Pfaffenberger said the decision by the UVic Board of Directors not to negotiate a tuition waiver was legitimate because the Public Sector Employers' Council, the government body that directs employer/employee bargaining agreements, refused to put it on the settlement negotiation mandate.

But for some members of the Faculty Association, the impact is more personal. Without the financial assistance of the tuition waiver or tuition scholarship fund, some members' children and spouses may not be able to attend UVic.

In fact, members Tim Hopper, Chris Lalonde and John Tanaka were so disappointed that on May 3 they submitted a petition, independent of the Faculty Association, to the UVic Board of Governors. The petition, signed by 331 members of the association, calls for the creation of a tuition waiver to replace the eliminated tuition scholarship. Several petitioners added passionate comments about their anger and concern for UVic's future competitiveness.

"If UVic is to be a first-class institution, we need to aspire to the programs and benefits that other first-class institutions have," wrote one member. Another complained, "The absence of a tuition waiver, together with the apparent wage discrepancies with other universities makes me wonder who is trying to build the successful team and environment needed to become an even better university."

One faculty member's comment read, "My spouse has applied for graduate studies next year at UVic and we are planning a family. The current situation undermines our future in Victoria ... not sure how I will accommodate this additional burden."

"There has always been a great deal of interest [in] jobs here when they're posted," said Bruce Kilpatrick, UVic's director of communications. "UVic has been very successful at getting our first choices in the competitive processes. When it comes to retaining existing faculty, UVic's record is probably second to none in the country, with very little turnover. Once people get here, they like to stay."

Pfaffenberger said the response to the tuition waiver issue has been the largest he's seen in his 37 years at the university.

"The university may pay the price for this uncompetitiveness over time," said Pfaffenberger. "Ultimately the responsibility lies with the Faculty Association, the administration and the board."

"All universities want to be competitive in attracting the best faculty that they possibly can, and it's a function of a variety of different factors rather than one specific item," said Kilpatrick.

Benefits always have to be calculated against funding, said Kilpatrick.

The board has referred the issue to their compensation and review committee and the waiver will be considered for the next salary and benefit settlement in 2010.

CORRECTIONS

For the story, "UVSS chair position finally declared," in Issue 1, Volume 59 of the *Martlet*, Penny Beames' vote results for UVSS chair were tallied and ratified on April 26, not April 27.

RCGA-GRAIG ABEL PHOTO

Vikes' men's golf team win the national University College Championship in Thornhill, Ontario.

Vikes are Canadian champs

By Amy Geddes

The Vikes' men's golf squad landed a close victory at the Royal Canadian Golf Association's 2006 University College Golf Championship.

At the Thornhill Country Club in Ontario, the Vikes earned UVic's third Canadian college golf championship crown in four years.

Players Saare Adams (scoring 72-78-85-86), Jade Dennill (75-72-72-73), Shelby Dreher (76-75-77-77), Todd Halpen (69-71-74-72) and Ross MacPherson (85-72-76-75) finished with a four-day score of 1179.

The Humber Hawks, from Humber College in Toronto, placed second and were only two strokes over the Vikes.

Bryan Carbery, the Vikes' head coach, expected the UBC Thunderbirds to be their key rivals but was thrown for a loop as the Vikes and the Hawks played shot-for-shot in the final round.

"The boys left it a bit closer than I would've liked," said Carbery. "They had a lead start before the final round but the Hawks tied it up after the 13th hole. Then they had my heart going."

A tornado warning shut down the second half of Wednesday's play and the championship continued despite a humidex rating close to 44 C.

On top of bad weather, fatigue was on the rise for both coaches and players.

The past two months have been jam-packed with an intensive tournament line-up.

"There had been lots of travel for all teams and everyone was getting tired," Carbery said. "I've traveled at least 28 days out of the last 45."

Yet humidity and fatigue proved to be no match for the Vikes, who pulled through with unshakable game play.

Squad captain Halpen's final five-over total of 287 made him runner-up "Top Individual for the Week," just two strokes over McMaster's Jason Wellings of West Flamborough, Ontario.

"Todd was the man," boasted Carbery, "He's the best college player in Canada, and I knew I could count on him. Focused! He's as focused an athlete you can get."

Back in Victoria, still aglow from the Vikes' championship win, Carbery said, "I just found out I've been named the men's team coach of the Team Canada golf team. I'll be off to the 2006 world university golf championships in Torino this summer."

Halpen and Dennill from this year's Vikes squad will be joining Carbery in Italy as Team Canada players.

"It will be interesting coaching Jade and Todd on the Team Canada team," said Carbery.

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Editorial

Promoting Pride

Victoria's annual Pride festivities should be a time for widespread excitement. But without vigorous promotion, Victoria's 12th annual Pride week has less of a chance at reaching its full potential and attracting tourists.

The celebration begins on June 24 and ends July 2 with the Pride Day Parade and Festival.

Other highlights of the event include the first-ever Rainbow Bike Ride, the annual Marcus Tipton Memorial Drag Baseball Game, a karaoke contest and the Big Gay Dog Walk.

Pride is a time for fun and letting loose in the gay and gay-friendly community. But it is also a time to celebrate accomplishments, reflect on the current environment and draw awareness to struggles the community is still facing.

In Victoria, one of the problems seems to be exposure.

Downtown and Around is a 16-page brochure compiled and produced by the City of Victoria and funded by the Downtown Victoria Business Association. The brochure documents arts, heritage and cultural sites and events in the city from May until August.

But this thorough summer line-up is without any mention of Victoria's Pride Celebration.

No baseball game. No bike ride. No parade. Nothing.

I've always been a fan of Pride events in Toronto. The city takes off its tie, dons a rainbow-coloured T-shirt and welcomes people from all over the world to join in celebrating individuality and sexual freedom. But being new to Victoria, I haven't seen this city in action during Pride.

And if I were a tourist, I'd probably have no idea that such an event was even taking place. A quick search for "gay pride" on the City of Victoria's official website yields zero results and our tourism pamphlets do nothing to publicize Pride.

David Tillson, president of the Victoria Pride Society, says that the city is extremely cooperative and the missing listing was an oversight on Pride's side.

Attendance at the parade increases slowly each year, and is now at about 7,500.

It would be a benefit not only for Pride event holders and attendees, but also for the city to embrace and trumpet Pride. Revenue from tourism, one of the most important industries in the city, is down this year. Promoting Victoria as a gay-friendly, progressive hotspot would help draw tourists from both Canada and United States for our Pride Celebration.

The UVic Pride Collective, which is investigating recent anti-queer vandalism at its office, will be marching in this year's parade with a UVic Pride banner and will also have a booth in the post-parade festival. The Pride Collective has trouble keeping momentum up during the summer months, so if you're free, be sure to show up and support them.

In the spirit of accepting yourself and everyone else, this issue of the *Martlet* profiles Prism owner Gary Penny, a man who'd like to see the end of Pride festivities.

The prime minister has recently announced that a free vote on same-sex marriage will be held this fall in the House of Commons. This backward motion in social change is disturbing and depressing, making this year's Pride events even more important.

ANTHONY FRATTAROLI GRAPHIC

Press freedom is public freedom

Harper's tiff with the press gallery could have severe concequences

By Carley Fortune

Introduced as a loving husband, father and cat-lover, Stephen Harper spoke to the Victoria Chamber of Commerce inside the Empress Hotel's Crystal Ballroom on May 26.

It was the first trip to the city by a prime minister in 13 years.

The excited audience sat at round tables covered in fine china and crisp linens, while a large group of reporters was squished against the wall at the back of the room, growing impatient.

Harper's visit to the city came shortly after he faced criticism on Parliament Hill for requiring press gallery reporters to submit their names for a list in order to ask questions.

Harper defended his decision, saying that order was needed at parliamentary press conferences.

The conflict came to a head on May 22 when two dozen journalists in Ottawa walked out of a Conservative press conference. It was reported at the time that Harper's Canadian tour was a way of escaping the hostile environment in the capital and speaking to more complacent local media across the county.

I sat beside two press gallery reporters during Harper's speech at the Empress. Their news organizations had forbidden them from asking questions because of the controversy back in Ottawa. I watched one of the reporters seek out members of the local media to see if anybody would ask the questions she had for Harper.

During the brief press scrum after the speech, only reporters who had put their name down on a list were allowed to ask a question each of the prime minister.

This list must have been passed around in the two minutes I took to go to the bathroom before the scrum began, because I had no idea one was being used and missed my chance to ask any questions of Harper.

The question I had wanted to pose would have gone like this: "Mr. Harper, you ran your election campaign on the need for a more accountable, more democratic federal government. How does requiring reporters to submit their names before being allowed to ask a question fit into your model of accountability?"

Unfortunately, no one on the list asked my question.

An attending press gallery reporter mentioned that Harper had done well so far to answer the questions of all reporters. But there is a fear that it will only be a matter of time before the Prime Minister's Office uses this tactic to blacklist certain reporters, especially during times of crisis.

The recent arrests of 17 terrorist suspects in Toronto, the World Cup and Chuck Guité's conviction in the sponsorship scandal have put the press gallery's concerns out of our minds.

But don't be fooled—the issue is not resolved. The annual June garden party held at the prime minister's residence for the press gallery has been cancelled this year.

Sharon Burnside, public editor of the *Toronto Star*, wrote on June 10 that when the prime minister refuses to talk to the media, he is refusing to talk to the public.

"Answering questions from the press is not a favour or a courtesy or a quaint custom," wrote Burnside. "It is his obligation and your due."

Harper has said that the public does not care about the problems of the press. I don't know whether this is true or not, but we certainly should.

Press freedom is an important issue in Canada as we venture into controversial waters with our military's prolonged stay in Afghanistan and an increased fear of terrorist attacks within our cities.

We cannot ignore the problems the press is having with the Prime Minister's Office. Our media is one of the checks our government must face when making decisions for the country.

Being named prime minister does not give Harper the authority to brush off the press and the criticisms of his government.

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Get Up, Stand Up

Open mike Jamtard is home to a slew of local talent

By Courtney Tait

WILLIE LI PHOTO

Amy, one of the singers at Jamtard, takes her turn at the mike.

The first time I sang at an open mike I was 21 and so nervous my hands shook. It was a Monday night. The bar was dark. A few friends came, their faces tilted up towards me, while I sat alone on stage with my acoustic steel-string. The song was Ben Harper's "Another Lonely Day." I had sung it a hundred times. I sang it in the shower, sang it walking to work. I sang it camping, half-drunk in front of a dying fire. If there was a soundtrack to my early-twenties existence, this song was the one on repeat.

Under the spotlight, in a room full of beer-drinking pool players and bearded guys with guitars, I sang the first line. Quietly. So quietly my friends shushed the people around them and leaned forward on their chairs. My voice a note above a whisper. I could hear it on the monitor, trembling through the microphone. I remember feeling myself divide, as though this voice and the girl it belonged to had suddenly veered down different lanes. Every warble and raspy quiver was on display.

I got through the first line, the first verse, and stumbled into the chorus. Some adrenaline seeped in. The voice on the monitor crawled back inside me. I got a little louder and opened my eyes. People stared, bound for this slice of time to the words slipping through me. I finished the final verse and slowed my strumming down. Between the last chord and the clapping there was a tiny pause, like the pull back after a first slow kiss, and in this pause I remembered why I love to sing.

Six years later, on a cold Monday in March, I cruise into Darcy's Pub and order a bottle of Stella Artois. The room is half-full, with a round bar in the middle and booths tucked against the wall at the back. Musicians gather at the wooden tables near the stage. Most of them come early and ask Adam Kittredge, the host, to add their name to the list, then hang back with a beer and wait to be called up.

The open mike night is called Jamtard, and it began in October of 2004. I'm not here to play. My guitar has been hibernating for longer than I care to admit. I'm here to listen.

> *I didn't want it to get out of hand. Then I realized an open mike has to be a free-for-all and I embraced it.*
> **-Adam Kittredge**

Eagle tells me his Christian name is Ed Wright.

"I started my blues career in 1965," he says. "I was 19. I formed a band called Blues X 5. We were doing early Stones." In 1967 his band opened for The Doors. Inside Darcy's, a black and white photo of the band (in tweed blazers and Beatles mops) is framed on the wall. The caption below it reads, "Victoria's Original Rhythm and Blues Group."

I order another beer and meet Nick, a 22-year-old grocery store manager who comes down to sing with his friend Zak.

"We were the first people to play at Jamtard, ever," he tells me. He worked at the store with Kittredge who heard him singing in the stock room. "He said, 'If I call you up to sing, will you come up?'" Nick sang one night and kept coming back. He tells me the crowd is always good, that there's never been any heckling. "I'll play the same fuckin' thing every week as long as it means I can get on stage."

While musicians perform, Kittredge darts back and forth from the side of the stage, adjusting the sound. His friends call him Ramtard, a nickname he's had since middle school. The posters around town are black and white, the word Jamtard spills out from an upside-down microphone.

Jamtard wasn't always this lively. The first winter Kittredge and his girlfriend Antonia performed half the night with Ryan on lead guitar.

"Originally, I thought I would call upon the music community I knew," Kittredge says. The night was presented as an "acoustic house jam" rather than an open mike.

"I didn't want it to be a free-for-all," he says. "I didn't want it to get out of hand. Then I realized an open mike has to be a free-for-all and I embraced it." Word got out that there were instruments and a lead guitarist to play with. And as Kittredge puts it, "the creatures started flocking." He hired Evan, who brought his drum kit down each week. Suddenly, whole bands could come and play.

The following Monday, I ask Kittredge to show me the list. He pulls a crumpled piece of white paper out of his pocket, eight names scribbled on it in blue ink.

"That's pretty solid," he says. "That'll take us to midnight." Shadow of the White Tree turns out to be two guys in ripped jeans and dark hair, one with a guitar, one without. They sing long, searching rock ballads, repeating the line "I'm coming home" over and over at the end of their last song. Clarka, another musician, is small and sings quietly, explaining after a Bright Eyes cover that she's kind of lost her voice.

Kyle, the harmonica guy, turns to me. "That's rock and roll," he says, "when you lose your voice and you keep going."

At home, my guitar is out of tune. I pick it up one afternoon when I should be writing and tune it by ear to the key of E. It's off, but close enough to play. I strum a few chords, stick a capo on the second fret and sing an old Radiohead song. My voice is soft. The strings dent my fingers.

Amy's going to sing tonight. She sips a glass of red wine while we talk, peacock feather earrings dangling from her ears. Amy, who is 27, grew up performing in church choirs, and later studied opera at Vancouver's Douglas College.

"School made me really insecure," she says. "Singing at Jamtard was the first time I sang in public in seven years." She tells me she's done some studio work, singing backups for a few Vancouver punk bands. Kittredge calls her to the stage, and together they open with Sarah Harmer's "Basement Apartment." Her voice saturates the room. Everyone listens.

On the far side of the pub, David sits on a long bench and watches the musicians play. He's young, wearing skinny jeans and a plaid scarf. Three girls sit with him. When his turn comes, he stands alone on stage and claps out a rhythm. The dance floor fills up before his singing even begins. When it does, his voice is deep and sultry. He plays guitar on the next two songs, bobbing his head back and forth while the band backs him up.

"A band has so much energy," he tells me after. "This is my fix to have some percussion."

Darcy's manager Blaine Sayers tells me Jamtard gets at least four new acts a week. I watch the musicians cheer for each other.

"You have to encourage the clapping," Kittredge says. "I have a really loud clap, which helps." I watch him call their names, remembering the flutter that happens when you get up and face a room from the other side of the mike.

I start practising. Alone in my apartment, I pluck out the chords to a song called "Fairy's Body," written by a friend I haven't seen in years. I used to sing it when I travelled; sang it on boats in Thailand, backpacking with my cousin. I play a Bob Marley song taught to me by an old boyfriend. My fingertips ache from the strings, but as I sing, I remember how I used to feel when I played. Like myself. More myself than when I did anything else.

"This is Courtney Tait, everybody," Kittredge says. "She's going to serenade us." Ryan sits with me on stage, bent over a slide guitar. A few friends have come. Their faces tilt up towards me as I strum the first chord, easing into a slow rhythm. The mike waits. I lean forward and sing.

WILLIE LI PHOTO

Mark (front) ends the night with a screamingly-loud rendition of "Hey Jude," accompanied by the crowd.

ROB ALDER PHOTO

The naked cyclists peddle through the Government and Yates Sts intersection.

Cyclists show some skin

By Sam VanSchie

Scantily clad cyclists swarmed the streets of Victoria on June 10 to celebrate the third annual World Naked Bike Ride.

Shocking civilians and tourists, the group of nearly 100 rode for over an hour through downtown and surrounding communities chanting, cheering, ringing bike bells and urging others to join them.

"You can put your clothes in my bike trailer," one cyclist told passersby.

While dozens of cyclists were brave enough to bare all, the majority wore underwear, body paint or some kind of costume.

Organizer and promoter Rebecca Mackin constructed her outfit from used bike tubes and white feathers.

"I use to think I'd never do this," said Mackin, "but it's liberating to break your own limits."

Taking place in over 40 cities around the world, the event was officially created in 2004 as a demonstration against car culture and oil dependency. But for many of the cyclists, that isn't the only reason they ride.

For some, stripping down is about rejecting the body ideals put forward by mainstream media and accepting one's self. This message was exemplified by one nude cyclist with, "Every part of me is beautiful," written across her back.

Others suggested that the ride is a protest against consumer culture, and one man confessed that he feels more naked without his bike than without his clothing.

For first-time participant Chelsea Clark, the reason to ride was simple.

"Nudity is better than clothing, and bikes are better than cars," Clark said joyfully.

Admittedly, many were out for the attention from onlookers and the media.

"We want to blow their minds," explained cyclist Rob Roa before leading the group across the sea wall.

"The best part is seeing the response of bystanders—they don't know how to react," added Roa, who cycled in lacy women's underwear.

Indeed, there were mixed reactions, the majority positive. Drivers in cars honked their horns, pedestrians cheered and clapped, people ran out of stores and houses to see the commotion, and everybody wanted a picture.

"I wish I had a bike," said spectator Stevo Leclerc who hopes to be involved in the ride next year.

Turnout has grown rapidly since the first year, which Mackin described as herself and a group of 15 friends cycling drunkenly in the rain late at night. The popularity of the event is no surprise for Mackin.

"Victoria is a British city with a long history of streaking," she said laughing.

Globally, cyclists come out in the thousands to take part in their local naked rides, with the largest groups in London and Madrid.

Roa was pleased with the turnout and enthusiasm of the Victoria ride and hopes next year's will be even bigger and better.

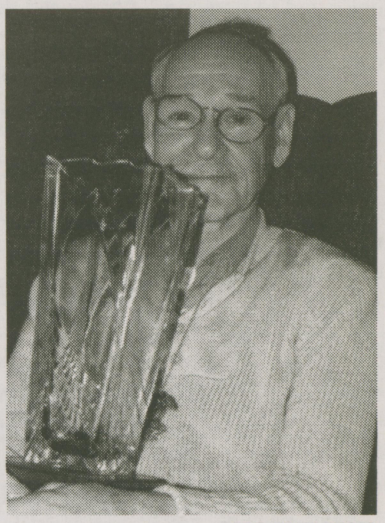
"It's the most fun you can have without your clothes," said Mackin.

ROB ALDER PHOTO

Cyclists gather outside the Legistature building downtown.

A man of Pride

By Seth Cooper



PROVIDED PHOTO

Gary Penny, 65, recipient of gay and lesbian legacy award.

Gary Penny remembers when the word "gay" wasn't a part of his vocabulary.

"I didn't even know the word [as it's used today]," says Penny. "You'd hear the word 'gearbox' in high school."

Now 65, Penny owns Prism, Victoria's only gay bar. He has been fighting for gay rights for six decades, long before recent coups such as same-sex marriage. In fact, at age 18, when he first wandered into a Toronto nightclub for gays, strict laws against sodomy were still in place in Canada.

"It was still illegal being gay," he remembers.

Penny worked at five discreet gay nightclubs in Toronto during the 1960s, both as a DJ and as a light technician.

It was not until he ventured into nightclub management that he began to bring gay businesses out of the closet. In 1970, Penny negotiated Canada's first liquor license for a gay business, a nightclub called Studio 5-11.

Penny eventually migrated to Vancouver in 1979, and began to change the cultural landscape of a city that wasn't particularly known for its gay scene. In addition to opening several Vancouver-area gay bars and nightclubs over the years, he also involved himself in a staggering number of annual gay-oriented events in both Vancouver and Victoria. In '79 he sat on the board of the Vancouver Pride Society and helped organize Vancouver's second pride festival. At the time the parade drew only 300 people.

"I can remember walking down the street having eggs thrown at me," says Penny.

But he persevered, lending his entrepreneurial savvy to the fledgling event every year.

"I got them into thinking of Pride as a business," says Penny. He and his partner Brian moved to Victoria and opened Prism in 2001. In 2004 Penny was welcomed back to Vancouver as a marshal in the same parade, which is now sponsored by dozens of businesses and draws over 185,000 people.

Despite the success that Penny has had with events such as Pride, he feels that owning a gay business brings him closer to his goal of bringing homosexuality to the forefront of the community on a daily basis.

"Making homosexuality commonplace will let us live a normal life....[Having gay businesses] is a way to integrate," he says. "I totally believe in integration."

He feels that this philosophy of integration accounts for the slight drop in attendance at gay nightclubs since the 1980s—and he thinks this is a good thing.

"Gay people will go to 'straight' places now too," says Penny. "There's less segregation."

Penny has witnessed the very same phenomenon among the clientele at Prism, approximately 30 per cent of whom he speculates are heterosexual.

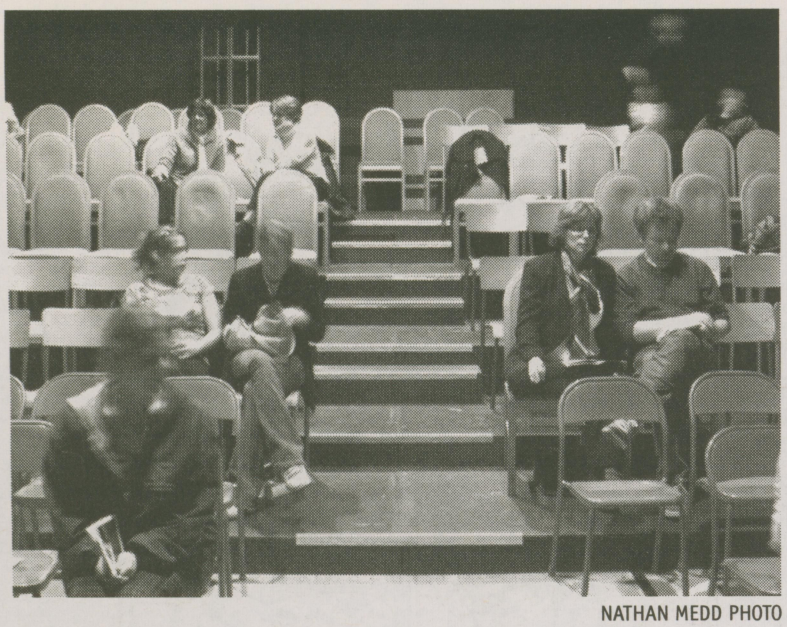
"[Gay bars] get a good percentage of straight people. I don't ask anybody about their sexuality when they walk in the door, and neither do my employees. What right do I have to ask someone their sexual orientation? It's none of my business."

And although Penny will once again be involved in both Vancouver's and Victoria's Pride festivals this summer, he hopes to see the end of Pride in his lifetime, or at least the need to hold such events.

"I hope the day will come when we don't have to have Pride Day," says Penny. "Pride holds a function right now, and it's an important function. Pride makes people aware of the numbers."

Penny has good reason to believe that this day will come, but he doesn't plan on sitting around until then.

"I'm like a cowboy," says Penny. "I'll die with my boots on."



NATHAN MEDD PHOTO

An audience gathers for a show at this year's Uno Festival.

Intrepid turns 20

By Anna Kemp

It felt more like a strange 1950s cocktail party than theatre. Up on stage, people helped themselves to pink cupcakes and a bottle of bourbon. Then performer Jay McLaughlin, wearing a pink dress and long green socks, yelled that the show was about to start and we all scurried to our seats as the lights dimmed.

McLaughlin's show, *Apocalypse*, was one of 10 solo acts presented at The Metro Theatre in this year's ninth annual Uno Festival. The festival, which took place between May 24 and June 4, is one of Intrepid Theatre's many contributions to Victoria's theatre scene.

Intrepid Theatre is a locally based, non-profit organization that supports independent, alternative theatre, founded to produce the city's Fringe Festival. This year Intrepid celebrates its 20th anniversary and its most successful season of the Uno Festival.

The festival mixed local talent with acts from South Africa, Australia and the U.K., and was the best yet. Box office numbers were up and feedback from audiences has been very positive.

Janet Munsil, Intrepid's artistic producer, attributes some of Uno's success to its new location in the Metro, which provides the city with much needed performance space.

"There are a lot of independent performing arts companies and bands, people who just don't have a home for their own audiences," says Munsil. "There's only so much presenting in coffee shops you can do before you really want to have something where you can control the lights and sound and make sure a cappuccino isn't being made in the background of your big scene."

The theatre has been used for all sorts of events since it opened last June, including concerts, screenings, dance recitals and parties.

"Everybody needs space," says Munsil. "Because we don't try to control what programming is in there, it attracts a pretty diverse cross-section of the community."

But Metro is not complete yet—new sound and lighting equipment as well as chairs and curtains are needed. A new box office system and spruced up entrance are also in sight.

Although Intrepid has raised $200,000 since last year, it aims to raise another $50,000 by November, in time for Metro's grand opening.

Despite the financial hurdles, the theatre has got a lot going on this summer. It's a venue for the Jazz Festival, Intrepid's Twentieth Anniversary Summer Series and the renowned Fringe Festival.

Munsil, a playwright herself, says Fringe plays an important role in encouraging the development of an independent theatre scene in Victoria.

"It gives local audiences a chance to see international work which otherwise would not come to Vancouver Island at all, and it gives local artists the chance to have their work seen by a supportive audience," says Munsil.

This year the Fringe Festival runs between August 24 and September 4 and features independent productions of drama, comedy, performance art and dance from around the world.

UVic hosts Cambodia benefit show

By Jessica Smith

Ragtime and Brahms have probably never been associated with human trafficking, deformities or the aftermath of genocide, until a recent charity concert for Cambodia at the Phillip T. Young recital hall at UVic.

Arne Sahlen, a UVic grad in piano performance and president of the Cambodia Support Group, helped organize the event. The group helps Cambodian charities by mixing locals' "experience, knowledge and initiative with foreign understanding of things like fundraising and project development," said Sahlen.

Most of the $2,600 raised at the benefit concert is going to Capacity Building for Disabled In the Community Organization (CABDICO). Sahlen explained that the prevalence of crippling diseases such as polio and leprosy and high accident rates are why CABDICO's presence is needed in Cambodia.

The Cambodia Group also addresses women's rights issues such as freedom from forced prostitution, discrimination in pay, access to education and legal rights through the Khmer Women's Voice Centre.

Its efforts include "informational shows about gender awareness, general human rights awareness, anti-human trafficking and youth anti-drugs information, [held] in provincial market centres," said Sahlen, who splits his time between Canada and Cambodia.

Part of Sahlen's purpose in Cambodia is cultural. He's in partnership with the Fine Arts University in Phnom Penh and plays traditional Cambodian music on the radio and on TV.

"We work with people who are directly responsible for rebuilding culture after Pol Pot's regime wiped out up to 90 per cent of the performing and visual artists," said Sahlen.

Sahlen speaks Khmer and has formed valuable relationships with the Cambodians he's met in his 20 years working in the country, but he has also seen the effects of 50 years of the instability, civil war and genocide that Cambodians are recovering from.

"We're dealing with things like people who've had terrible education ... non-existent for years, and malnourished, and all these horrible things that effect brain function."

Sahlen wants a revival of the country to come from Cambodians themselves.

He makes the purpose of the group clear, "We're there to support you, to do it with you, not for you."

"Sometimes people in that environment become donor-dependant," he explained. "The foreign experience for locals in any of these countries is a real double-edged sword. They're sort of the saviour of everything." Sahlen says he and his group are "definitely not foreigners who barge in and say, 'We know how to do this.'"

Most of Cambodia Group's funding comes from private donors and fundraising events like the benefit concert, not from grant proposals, "because proposals tend to come with fairly rigid rules, and because we prefer, as much as possible, to have people responsible for creating their own systems," said Sahlen.

The benefit concert put the varied skills of performers—opera, jazz and the Victoria Children's Choir—on the same stage for an evening. When the concert ended, Sahlen asked the audience to go home and find a charity, any charity, because Cambodia is not the only cause worth supporting.

Former monk spreads his brand of peace

By Alex Gillett

Want to save the world? Alan Clements thinks he knows how—and he wants to let us in on the secret.

In 1977, Clements dropped out of law school and became the first American Buddhist monk in Burma. After 10 years of 20 hours a day of meditation, he was thrown out by Burma's dictatorship, but that didn't stop him from fighting for the country as a human rights activist and journalist. Since returning to North America in 1997, Clements has taken his ideals on the road.

His new one-man show, which premiered in Victoria on May 26, is called *How to Save the World: God? Drugs? Revolution?* How could I possibly pass on a show with a title like that?

Everything about Clements' show is unorthodox—from its subject matter to its being completely unscripted.

Clements had the crowd at the McPherson Playhouse laughing, clapping and nodding in agreement. As he spoke and sometimes sang, Clements covered a range of controversial topics from George Bush to our "created idea of God" to his liberal usage of four-letter words.

"If you wonder why the world hates America, just go to fucking Texas," he told the audience—this from a man who grew up in a Texan oil family.

Clements spoke about his hope to see men banned from political office and his desire to see gas prices rise to $12 a litre. He said we are defacing the planet every time we put our hand on the pump.

The key message of the show, which was a benefit for Burma's imprisoned Nobel Peace Laureate Aung San Suu Kyi, was one of freedom and peace.

"A lot of people and audiences, bless their hearts, are complicit with war, violence, rape, genocide, starvation and murder," Clements tells me. "Every dollar that we spend—do we know how much of that goes to the denigration of life?"

Clements will continue to spread his message through his shows and the online institute he leads. His biggest goal is to hear the people of the world say "No" to war.

Those who attend the show and read his books hear his message loud and clear, but are his words reaching a diverse enough audience?

Looking around the theatre at Clements' show, I noticed that the crowd was mainly middle-aged, dressed in button-downs and drinking wine from the lobby concession. The lack of students and youth was unfortunate, considering the importance of Clements' message. I think young people are more likely to take his message to heart and push for social change. So why were there so few at the show? I've almost managed to convince myself that it was because of the cost of admission ($25 or $32), not because they'd rather be out getting drunk on a Friday night. Almost.

Clements says it's often young people who truly understand what he has to say.

"When audiences know that their true wealth is in their hearts, then I feel well received and I feel really honoured," he says. "And frankly a lot of young people get that."

Classifieds

maned@martlet.ca

HELP WANTED

Western Canada Wilderness Committee is now **hiring** door-to-door canvassers. If you are intelligent, articulate and passionate about the environment, please apply. FT/PT 388-9292.

CIGARETTE SMOKERS Ages 20-54 Required for Market Research Focus Groups $$ paid if selected. Call 604-640-0658.

FOR HIRE

ROOF & GUTTER INSPECTION, REPAIR, REROOFING, DEMOSSING AND POWERWASHING. Call: 380-5685.

SERVICES

Two wrongs don't make a write! Get an experienced editor to accept your pain at pto_edit@yahoo.ca www.pto-editing.com 250-381- 8650.

VOLUNTEERS WANTED

Interested in volunteering in radio? Behind the scenes or on-air? CFUV 101.9 FM is UVic's campus/community radio station broadcasting from the campus at 2290 watts of power. We are looking for those interested in producing or helping out in regards to public affairs, native student, women or queer issues but everyone is welcome to apply. Contact our Volunteer Coordinator, Kate Hollefreund at vol4cfuv@uvic.ca or drop by the station in the SUB, RMB006, Monday to Friday 10-5 p.m.

SAILING. Support your community and get a great tan as summer volunteer for the Disabled Sailing Association, Victoria Branch. Become a powerboat driver or a companion sailor to people with disabilities. Experience is not needed, but preferred. Training provided. Call Recreation Integration Victoria at 477-6314 ext 14 or email dsa@rivonline.org for more information.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

A Night in Ethiopia. Saturday, June 17, 7 p.m. Ethiopian dinner, music, dancing, craft raffle at 1611 Quadra St. $10.00 all proceeds to the Orphans of Aids in Ethiopia through the Yenegew Tesfa (Children's Circus). Call 381-1850.

BREAKFAST WITH HEALTH D.M. DR. PENNY BALLEM ON JUNE 22. Penny will share how she managed challenging workplaces & went from doctor to BC's D.M. of Health. Grand Pacific Hotel @ 7:30-8:30 am. $30/adult, $20/student. For info/tix: deborah.dodds-runzer@telus.com

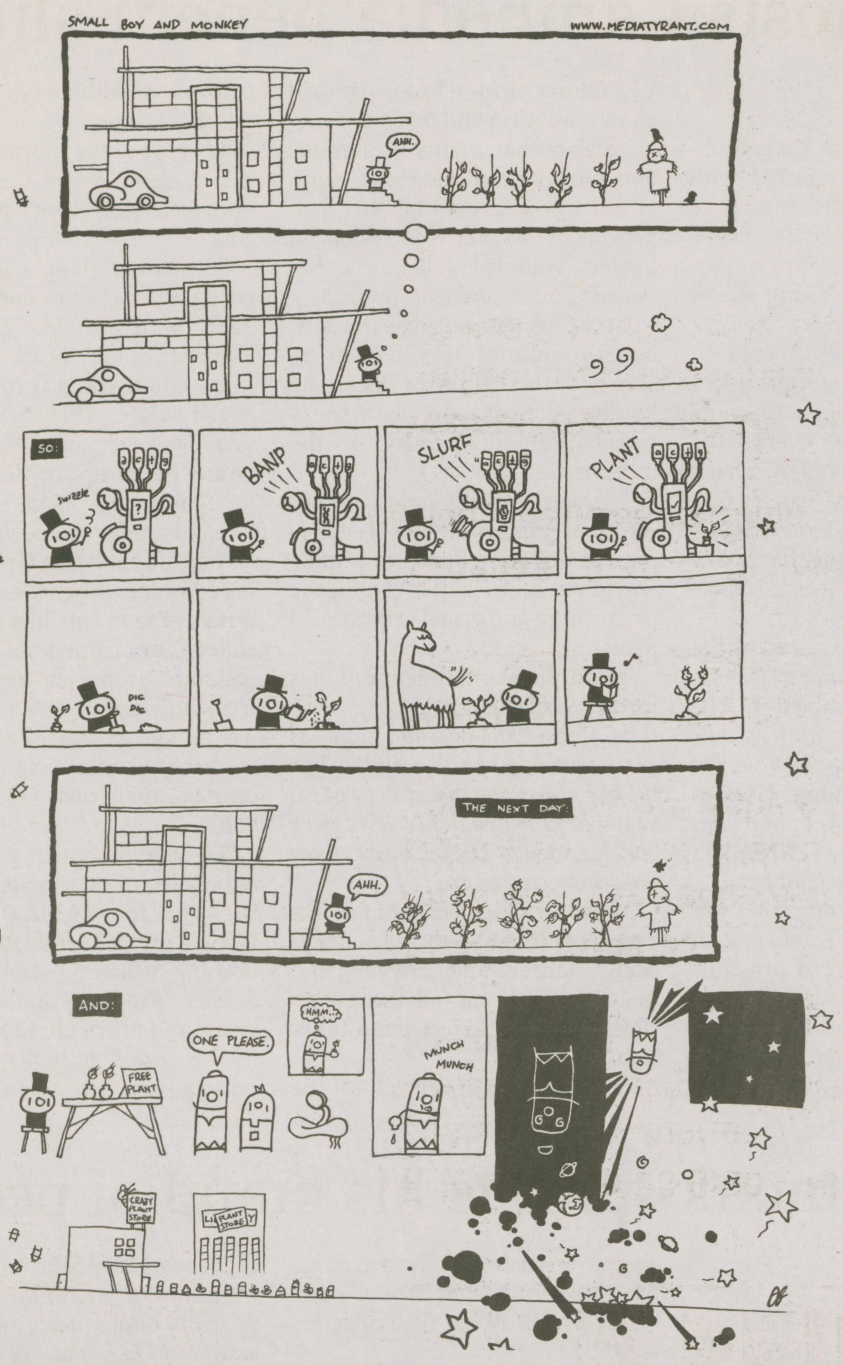
Adoption-Separation/Search/ Esquimalt Military Family Resource Centre AGM, June 15, 2006, 6:30 p.m. in the NOTC Gunroom. Want to get involved in your local MFRC? Then join us at our AGM. For more information, call us at 363-2640 or toll free at 1-800-353-3329.

STUFF WANTED

A men's bike in fair condition, from $75-$150. Call 516-7743.
A used tennis racket in decent condition. Call 721-8360.

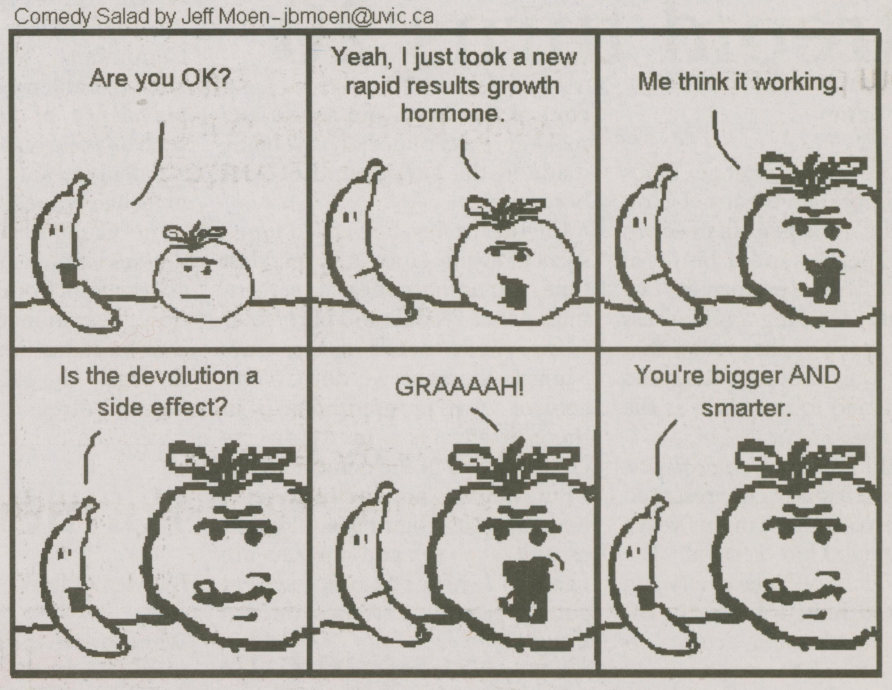
HEY YOU!

Why not write for the *Martlet*?



DRY SPELLS
featuring Wilhelm Reich
"a desert oasis of mild bemusement."
Hi there folks, my name is Wilhelm Reich and I need to talk to you about something vitally important: your private sex lives!
Instead of acting, these two have sublimated their sexual desire into a "friendly" outing at the movies.
So... you like movies?
whatever.
This is a shame, because sexual tension builds, turning minor irritants into unexpected outbursts.
Arrg!!! My Babylon 5 fan-fiction is riddled with continuity errors!
An active and healthy sex life, on the other hand, gives you confidence and can help you roll with life's punches.*
Awww!!! The little guy likes to bite my neck!
*The next day...
And speaking of healthy sex lives, according to my orgone-meter your desperation index is off the charts!
Uh, thanks Willy, but I think I'll write next month's strip.
P. Nym

Comedy Salad by Jeff Moen - jbmoen@uvic.ca


Are you OK?
Yeah, I just took a new rapid results growth hormone.
Me think it working.
Is the devolution a side effect?
GRAAAAH!
You're bigger AND smarter.

PRISM PRIDE GUIDE 2006

Friday, June 23 8:30 - 10:30pm
Janis Mullan Quartet
-Melissa Etheridge Tribute
$5 cover

Sunday, June 25
Mr. & Ms. Gay Vancouver Island
Hosted by: David Tillson
Special show by: Baby April

Monday, June 26 9:30pm
Pride Karaoke Contest

Tuesday, June 27 9:30pm
Pride Drag Queen Bingo

Wednesday, June 28
Hot Buns Contest Finals
Contest runs on: June 7, 14, & 21

Thursday, June 29
Customer Appreciation
University Special

Friday, June 30
Pride Party

Saturday, July 1
Out of town Drag Show:
Willie Taylor, Mandy Kamp, Carlotta, and more

Sunday, July 2
All Day Pride Party
Three DJ's and a special Pride Drag Show
Annual Pride Parade – 12pm, Gov't Street
Pride Festival – 1pm, Fisherman's Wharf

PRISM

PRISMlounge

www.prismlounge.com